



MO'OLELO PĀKA (PARK STORY)

Quarterly Newsletter from the City and County of Honolulu Department of Parks and Recreation
October through December 2019

Message from Director

It is no secret that our department prides itself on being an 'ohana who can handle any task when we work together. This idea is symbolized by our amazing Honolulu City Lights tree, which was recognized as the 'Best in Show' recently during a ceremony at Honolulu Hale. It is a perfect example of the creativity, talent, diligence, and resourcefulness our diverse staff possess. As we enjoy this holiday season I want to sincerely thank all of you for your hard work and dedication, day-after-day, year-after-year. I believe that celebrating and cherishing our 'ohana is the most important part of the holidays, and we certainly have a lot to appreciate as we reflect on this past year: our continued efforts to improve park facilities big and small across the island, to make them safer and more secure, and to look ahead for opportunities to enhance our facilities and programs. These are just a few of the ways we have created a positive difference in our communities. I am grateful to be part of a DPR team with such amazing staff, and hope you enjoy your contributions as much as I do. May you all have a safe and happy holiday season! Mahalo.

UPCOMING PARKS & REC EVENTS!

Senior Valentine Dance: Tuesday, Feb. 11, 8:30a.m. to 12:30p.m. at the Neal S. Blaisdell Exhibition Hall

Join hundreds of energetic kūpuna from 30 different senior clubs and dozens of special guests as they boogie down to timeless tunes. Now in its 51st year, the event begins with a performance by the Royal Hawaiian Band and is free to the public!

Lei Court Selection: Saturday, March 7, 9a.m. to 3p.m. in the courtyard of Kapolei Hale

Now in its 92nd year, this timeless tradition to determine the prestigious Lei Court is an amazing display of Hawaiian culture and pageantry. Contestants will be scored on lei making, poise & personality, speaking in English & Hawaiian, and hula. This year, the age group is Nā Mākua, with age range from 31 to 45 years by the date of the selection event.

"We add quality to life!"



Talk Story Festival

October 11

Celebrating its 31st year, this annual event showcases talented orators as they share their mana'o through traditional Hawaiian storytelling. With this year's lei theme, participants had a chance to make a lei of their own before the event.

Children & Youth Day

October 12

There was plenty of family fun amidst the beauty of Ho'omaluhia Botanical Garden. Keiki and parents alike enjoyed arts & crafts, games, nature walks, and plenty of fishing during this day.

Honolulu City Lights 'Best in Show' Tree

December 6

For the 2nd year in a row, our Honolulu City Lights tree won "Best in Show!" This continues our reign as the most awarded department for city lights trees. This was truly a team effort, with all 4,400 shells donated by former DPR Director Toni Robinson and all staff helping to decorate the white shells.

Hawai'i Arbor Day

November 1

5th graders from Waikī Elementary joined the Mayor and DUF to plant three monkeypod trees in Kapi'olani Park to mark Hawai'i's Arbor Day. The following day, hundreds of trees were given away at Foster and Wahiawā botanical gardens to help reach our goals of planting 100,000 trees by 2025.

45th Mayor's Craft & Country Fair

November 23

Over a thousand attendees got an early start on holiday shopping, and for a good cause! The proceeds from these sales help our senior clubs to fund their activities and programs throughout the year, a truly win-win situation.



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Mahalo to our Outstanding Employees!



Ken Edamura



Theresa Gerner



David Kahue



James Fernandez



Foster Botanical Garden Staff

Sherie Recca, Anna Mentac, Justin Rickard & Robert Craft III



Gannenmono means "First Year People", and it refers to Japanese immigrants who courageously left their homeland to start a new life in Hawai'i as plantation workers. To mark the 150-year anniversary of their initial arrival, a 1,300-pound, 3-foot wide and 5-foot high granite memorial stone from Yokohama, Japan was installed at the Honolulu Hale's Japanese Garden. To accommodate and beautify this large memorial, the Division of Urban Forestry's Landscape and Nursery Section had to re-design the Japanese Garden, renovate the irrigation system, remove existing landscaping, and install new plant life including three *Jatropha* trees. All of this within a 2½ week span, amidst a city hall bustling with additional contractor work and a special election, to be ready by a [dedication ceremony on April 18, 2019](#). DUF not only rose to this task, but far exceeded expectations, displaying an effort truly indicative of the hard-working Gannenmono. I am proud to have worked with this fine staff.

~Dave Kumasaka, DUF Landscape Architect

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- **Kaka'ako Parks Transfer:** The transfer of 41-acres of primarily park land, from the Hawai'i Community Development Authority to the city, [officially took effect in November](#). Now these public facilities will receive the care and maintenance that we can provide for this community. Currently, the plan is to merge the former Kewalo Basin Park into Ala Moana Regional Park and make one large Kaka'ako Regional Park across the harbor. We are working hard to bring aboard new staff to assist with park improvements, as repairs to the waterfront park require a partial closure until February.
- **SPO enforcements:** A large coordinated effort removed nearly 131 tons of debris and dozens of abandoned vehicles/ machinery from a [half-mile stretch at Kea'au Beach Park](#). Further enforcement and volunteer efforts were held along other areas of the Leeward Coast following these cleanups.
- **Sew a Lei Poster Contest:** The [2020 Memorial Day Poster Contest is now open](#) to all school-age children across the state. Entries are due by Jan. 24. We hope that additional efforts to include our keiki in the Sew a Lei drive will help us reach our goal of 38,000 lei for Memorial Day more easily.
- **Natatorium EIS:** The [Final Environmental Impact Statement for the Waikiki War Memorial Complex](#), also known as the Natatorium, is complete. There were four options surveyed, and the Perimeter Deck option was the preferred choice over the other three options.
- **Spring Class Registration:** Online registration for free Spring 2020 classes is scheduled to begin at 9 a.m. on January 6, 2020. Walk-in registration for programs requiring payment is scheduled from Jan. 14 to Jan.16 for Districts 1 & 2 and from Jan. 15 to Jan. 17 for Districts 3, 4, & 5.
- **Community Forestry:** We launched a new social media campaign to bolster public support and involvement towards our ambitious goals of planting 100,000 trees by 2025 and increasing urban tree canopy cover to 35% by 2035 (currently it is around 25%). You can find those feeds by searching for [@OahuTrees1 on Facebook](#), following [@oahutrees on Instagram](#) or viewing the new [Community Forestry](#) webpage.

Kākou for Parks Program Updates:

Since 2015, Mayor Caldwell and DPR have continued to show dedication towards revitalizing some of our aging or damaged facilities through this one-of-a-kind program. This has resulted in improvements to **164 different parks** around O'ahu, including:



Kamāmalu Neighborhood Park



Pu'ōhala Neighborhood Park



Kuahelani Neighborhood Park

120

New & Refurbished Play

92

Renovated Comfort Stations

347

Resurfaced Play Courts